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A
SERMON

Preach'd at the
ORDINATION
OF

623.d
Mr. *William Cooper*,³

In BOSTON, N.E.

May 23. 1716.

By *Benjamin Colman*.

WITH

Mr. COOPERS *Confession of Faith*,
and his *Answers* to the *Questions*
proposed to him upon that Oc-
casion.

☞ N. B. Some *Paragraphs* omitted in the
Preaching, are here inserted in their
proper places.

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their Shops near the Town-House. 1716.

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SERMON

Preached at the

ORDINATION

OF

Mr. William Cooper

in the Town of

Albany

By Benjamin Colman

WITH

Mr. Cooper's Confession of Faith
and his answers to the Questions
proposed to him upon that Oc-
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TO THE

READER.

THE Apology with which I begin the Sermon will need an Explanation, if these Sheets come to the View of Strangers to our Country; where hitherto it has been Usual for the Person who is to be Ordained Himself to Preach. This Practice has of late Years been much complain'd of by our Young Ministers, as a Great Impropriety Imposed on them. In which Opinion I concur, and was therefore willing to relieve Mr. Cooper, and to assign him a more proper Part and Service, which He also chose. This also is New with us. But we had the Satisfaction to see it highly Approved by the Venerable and Learned Assembly who were present at his Ordina-

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tion : *A great Number of whom also desir'd this Publication of what they then heard.*

THIS is not done in the least to Impute any Defect to the Ordinations that have been among us, which are always performed, so far as I have ever seen, with great Solemnity and Awfulness. Neither am I so vain as to think of prescribing a Method to Others. But as I have no Opinion of an Exacted Uniformity in Religious Administrations, so I presum'd to act my own Judgment with all Humility in my own Flock, and I bless GOD for the Candid Acceptance it has met with.

I will only add my Prayers for the Presence and Glory of CHRIST in all our Churches, and Entreat the Prayers of my Reverend Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry, and of all the People of GOD, for Mr. Cooper and my Self, and for the Flock over which the HOLY GHOST hath made us Overseers.

B. COLMAN.

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2. Tim. II. 1.

*Thou therefore my Son, be Strong
in the Grace that is in Christ
Jesus.*

I Shall make no *Apology* for taking this part of the Exercise to Day upon my Self. The place I stand in, and wherein thro' the Patience and Forbearance of GOD to me I have so long stood, will sufficiently Apologize for me in this particular. I have indeed Abundant Reason to think my Self the most Unmeet among all my Brethren, to Preach of the Ministerial Duties and Obligations to them. Nor may it look so well for One of the *Least* in Grace among the Ministers of the LORD JESUS to bring them the Exhortation to be Strong in the Grace that is in Him. I should therefore have much rather desired, and have much more need, to be Preach'd unto my Self by those that hear me this day. But as my dear Brother, for whose Separation to the Holy Ministry of the LORD JESUS we are now Conven'd,

tho't

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tho't it altogether Improper for him to Preach on this Occasion, unto this Grave and Reverend *Assembly*; So unto *Him* it is, by his Desire, that I stand up to Preach, and unto *My Self* with him : to whom as none may be presum'd to speak with more Concern and Affection, so none with a more rightful Authority, upon his *Induction into the Pastoral Office with Me*, can bring him this most tender and yet most Awful Exhortation and Charge ; *Thou therefore my Son, be Strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

IN which Words we may Observe,

1. *THE Persons from and unto whom they are spoken :* from the Great Apostle Paul unto his Beloved Timothy. *Thou therefore my Son.* Words fitly spoken from the One unto the Other ; whether we consider,

1. *THE Authority* with which they are deliver'd, as became the *Apostles Age and Office*, and Timothy's *Years and Relation to him*. He might be much bold in Christ to *Enjoyn* him that which was not only Convenient, but highly Necessary ; being *Such a One as Paul the Aged*, and every way a Father to Him.

MINISTERS are all of them *Elders* by Office and as *Fathers* in the Church : Tho' Young in Years yet they Commence *Seniors* in Office. 1 Pet. 5. 1. *The Elders that are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder.* But *Aged Ministers* are to be reverently Esteemed, both by Younger Ministers and People, as doubly *Fathers* in the Church : They are Fathers to the other Elders of the Churches ; the Parity of the Ministerial Order preserved.

2. *THE Affection and Tenderneß* expressed is as became

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came the Heart of a Father. The words breathe a sincere and hearty Love : Thou therefore *My Son*. Timothy was not only a Son to Him in respect of his Youth, but also in a Gracious likeness of Spirit ; *His own Son in the Faith*. He was it is likely *Begotten* by him unto CHRIST thro' the Gospel, or more fully *Instituted* in the Truths of the Gospel by him, and *Ordained* by his Hands unto the Work of the Ministry. At least he was a Younger Minister, and had Served with the Apostle *as a Son with his Father* in the Work of the Gospel ; *Ministring* with and under him in a Reverent and Dutiful Observance of his Instructions and Directions ; *having fully known his Doctrine, manner of Life, Purpose, Faith, Long-suffering, Charity, Patience, Persecutions, Afflictions, &c.* A Son worthy of such a Father. *Soboles sincera Parentis.*

2. *LET us consider the awful Exhortation and Charge given. Be Strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.* It is not a piece of Important Advice only, but a Command from the LORD, and that to him *as a Minister* of the LORD JESUS. The Apostle had before been laying down the Ministerial Graces and Duties, that became and obliged Timothy in his Sacred Function. " And indeed the *Epistles to Timothy and Titus* are a Body of Canons truly Apostolical, sufficient to direct the *Pastors* of the Church, how to govern themselves and how to guide their People. Now to Excite Timothy, and in him all of us who have the Honour and Trust to be put into the Ministry, unto the utmost Care and Diligence in the faithful Discharge of these Incumbent Duties, he Exhorts, Admonishes and Charges in the Words of my Text, *Be Strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

STRENGTH is necessary when a Person undertakes

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a work of Labour and hard Service, or is to sustain any Weight or Burden. And if the Service or Work undertaken be of a Spiritual and Religious Nature, then there must be Strength in Grace to discharge it. Holy Offices and Sacred Trusts call for great Measures of Sanctity and Spiritual Gifts. Even as Civil and Secular Trusts require suitable Qualifications, and Natural or Acquired Parts, in Them that sustain 'em.

BUT what this Ministerial Strength in Grace imports, and, what the Grace that is in Christ Jesus may imply, I shall consider under the Doctrine, which is this.

DOCT. THAT it is an awful part of the Duty Incumbent on the Ministers of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and of the Charge to be laid upon them in their Undertaking their Holy Office, that they be Strong in the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS.

IN Speaking to this very Serious and Holy Truth, I shall Enquire.

1. WHAT is meant by the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS?

2. WHAT it is to be Strong in it?

3. WHY the Ministers of CHRIST ought in an especial manner to be Strong in Grace?

AND,

4. SHOW that this is therefore an awful part of the Charge that is to be laid on them in their Undertaking the Ministerial Trust and Office.

I may not be allow'd to Enlarge on the many Particulars which offer on one & another of these Heads. I must only name things, and content my self with some General Hints; wherein I will Endeavour to be as distinct and clear as I can in a few words,

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WHAT is meant by this Phrase, *The Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS*?

I Answer, It is a most natural and proper Account of Sanctifying and Saving Grace, and it takes in all Evangelical Graces, which do accompany Conversion to GOD and Salvation by JESUS CHRIST. That Grace which the Gospel of CHRIST requires to be in thee, as ever thou lookest To be Saved by Him. That Grace which is required of One in thy Place and Station. All Ministerial Graces if thou art called to Serve and Minister in the Gospel. That Grace which all partake of who are in JESUS CHRIST; and which proves our Interest in Him; for if any Man have not the Spirit of CHRIST he is none of His. That Grace which is derived from CHRIST JESUS, who is the Glorious Head of the Church, of whose fulness we all have received and Grace for Grace: (for unto every one of us is given Grace according to the Measure of the Gift of CHRIST; without whom we can do nothing.) Finally, That Grace whereof CHRIST was so Glorious an Example when He was here on Earth. For His Glory was then beheld as the Glory of the Only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. Grace was poured into his Lips; and he received not the Spirit by Measure.

In short then, It is the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS; because He is the Exemplary, the Purchaser, and the Dispenser of it; He is the Grace which flows from Him, which leads to Him, which is our Comfort to Him, and without which we have no Part in Him; we can never be united by Him. So that the Phrase ascribes to CHRIST all the Glory of this Grace which adorns the Church and every Holy Member

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of it, in their different Degrees and Glories; admonishes us of our Dependance on CHRIST, and Obligations to Him; and directs us to Him as filling all in all.

II. WHAT is it to be STRONG in the Grace of CHRIST?

I answer. That to be sure it Implies, as the Truth of Grace in the heart, so also some Considerable Growth in Grace, and a good Degree thereof attained. This is the least that can be tho't of it: A Principle of Universal Holiness, and Goodness well rooted within, and governing our Lives and Actions in a visible and vigorous manner.

IT supposes the Vertues both of the *Active and Passive Life* in the Habit and Practice of them. We must be Strong to Labour and do the thing that is Good; and we must be Strong to bear and suffer graciously whatever Fight of Afflictions GOD calls us to Encounter with.

THE Apostle in the Verses after the Text explains to us what he means by our being Strong in Grace in three Comparisons or Allusions: Thou therefore endure hardness as a Good Souldier, strive for the Mastery and the Crown, (alluding to the Conqueror in the Grecian Games, whether in wrestling, racing or combat) and then lastly, labour like the Husbandman. Now each of these Allusions imply great degrees both of Activity, Diligence and Industry, Constancy and Perseverance; and also of Self-denial, enduring afflictive Evils, Patience and Long-suffering. And truly these two ways is the Strength of Grace to be Exhibited and Expressed; in Doing and in Bearing.

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IT is utterly Inconsistent with Sloth & Inactivity, Decay and Declension. It is Stedfast, Immoveable and Abounding in the work of the LORD. It will not be content with common Measures, nor rest in any present Attainments; but it aspires and covers earnestly more and more, and is Ambitious to Excel, but with a perfect Satisfaction and Complacency in the Excellencies of Others. A Strong desire of more Grace, and unfainting Endeavours after Increase there, in, is the natural Means, the genuine sign, and the evident Fruit of Strength in Grace: *Phil. 3. 13.*

AGAIN, If thou faint under Afflictions thy Strength is small. Patience must have its perfect Work, or else much is wanting and the Defect is great. Endure hardness, sayes our Context; the word is *κακοπαθειον*, bear Evil. The Strength of Grace is express'd in this unto the utmost. *Col. 1. 11. Strengthened with all might, according to his Glorious Power, unto all Patience, and Long-suffering, with Joyfulness.* Here is a Divine Strength in our Weakness.

MOREOVER, We must Labour to be Strong in every Grace of the HOLY SPIRIT, and more especially in the Cardinal Vertues of Christianity. Strong in Faith giving Glory to GOD: and a Love strong as Death: And so thro' the whole Circle and Constellation of Graces; according as the Divine Power gives us all things pertaining unto Godliness; thro' the Knowledge of Him who hath called us to Glory and Vertue; and hath required us to give diligence to be adding to our Faith every Vertue, and that they be in us and abound, *2 Pet. 1. ult.*

BUT how little do these General Hints answer the Great Enquiry before us? Yet I may not allow

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my self to Enlarge. Or if I did I should find it difficult to keep up to the *Original Word* *Ενδυναμω*, which not only speaks Ability, Vertue and Power in some considerable Degree; but is used to express the Resolution, Valour and Courage of Soldiers, and the Might and Force of Armies. Yea it is frequently used both in the *Verb* and in the *Noun* to express the Power of GOD, and a Strength Supernatural. As for Instance in all those Places where we read of CHRIST's Strengthening us to do all things, of the LORD's standing by Paul and strengthening him, and of His Enabling him for the Ministry; it is the same Word that is used. In like manner where we read of the Gospels coming in Power and in the Holy Ghost, and in demonstration of the Spirit and of Power; of the Baptists coming in the Spirit and Power of Elias, and of our LORD JESUS Himself His being Anointed with the Holy Ghost and with Power: The Word is *ενδυναμω*.

SO as is well known to this Learned Auditory, *Δεξια δυνάμεως* is the Right Hand of Power, *Ενεργημα* *δυναμειν* is the Working of Miracles, and Finally, *Κυριος δυνάμεως* is the LORD of HOSTS.

NOW this Use of the Word in the Sacred Writings may I think well Suggest to us Two Things, respecting that Strength in Grace commended to us in the Text.

Namely,

1. THAT it implies the Fortitude, Courage and Constancy of a Mind, Divinely Stablish'd in the Truth, Settled in the Love and Practice of Holiness, and Engaged in the Cause of Religion, so as to Appear in the Defence of it, and to be ready to Encounter any Dangers for the sake thereof. To this Courage and

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and Holy Resolution the Apostle here Exhorts Timothy, that while others were shewing their Pusillanimity and Cowardize (Chap. 1. v. 15.) He should be Constant to the Truth and Valiant for it; and not affrighted at any Dangers that might threaten him in his Ministry.

INTO this Interpretation Expositors have justly gone, and so the Precept is the same which GOD gave to Joshua when he took the Charge of Israel, and was to enter upon the War with the accursed Cananites, the Type of our Spiritual Warfare: Josh. 1. 6, 7. *Only be thou strong and very Courageous.*

2. THE other thing fairly Implied and necessary to Observe, is this, That *this Strength is not of our own, but we are strong only in the LORD and in the power of his might*; as it is said, Eph. 6. 10. And truly we must glory in our Infirmities that the Power of CHRIST may rest upon us. When we are Weak then we are Strong. The Divine Strength is made perfect in Weakness, and out of the mouths of Babes and Sucklings GOD ordains Strength, to still the Enemy and the Avenger. As Deborah Sang of Old, Praise ye the LORD for the Avenging of Israel, — O my Soul thou hast trodden down Strength. He is the Glory of our Strength, and in His Favour our Horn is Exalted.

TO Conclude this Head, The best of Saints at their best Estate are but weak in Grace, and do truly so account themselves; and those that are strongest do abound most in the sense of their own Weakness; and when they are Weakest in their own humble and just Thoughts of themselves then are they strongest. However some are Stronger than others, for among them

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them in whom there is true Grace there may be very different Degrees and Measures thereof.

Nay that may be esteemed a good Strength of Grace in one Person, which may not be so in Another, considering his Greater Bonds, and Advantages, Gifts and Talents, or more peculiar Relation to GOD. For Instance, That may not be worthy to be called Strength of Grace in a Minister of the Gospel, which may be so in some Private Christians. Which leads me to the Third Particular propounded under the Doctrine, which is,

III. THAT the Ministers of the Gospel ought in especial manner to be Strong in Grace.

THEY if any, they above all Men. Timothy to whom this Charge is given was an Eminent Minister of CHRIST, a Man of God, and an Evangelist. Our Brother and Fellow-Labourer in the Gospel of CHRIST (says the Apostle of him to the Thessalonians) whom I have sent to stablish you and comfort you concerning your Faith. He therefore needed to be Strong in the Faith himself, that he might strengthen others. Nay, Timothy was Strong in the Grace in CHRIST, and yet is required to be Stronger. If HE needed this Admonition and Exhortation, how much more do the most Pious of the present Ministers of CHRIST, the Pastors and Teachers of the Churches in these After-Generations, who come so much short of the Measures and Strength of Apostles and Evangelists.

CHRIST expects this of His Ministers, and His Churches do expect this of their Pastors, that they Excel and Shine in Holiness. Holiness is the Pro-
fession

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profession of the Order, and GOD Angels and Men are Witnesses to the Solemn Engagements of all that are Admitted into it. We are to go Before our Flocks, and Lead them in the Ways of GOD; to be Examples to them, and Patterns of Good Works. We are to teach them by Experience what we have felt and handled of the Word of Life. We are to Minister to their Growth and Increase in Grace, and to Feed as the Babes in CHRIST with Milk, so the Adult with Strong Meat: even those who at full Age and by reason of Use, have their Senses exercised to discern between Good and Evil.

THE Ministers of Religion should be the Salt of the Earth, and the Lights of the World. *Sole et sale nihil Utilius.* By their Doctrines and Lives they are to Season and Preserve others, and to Illuminate a Dark World, *Mat. 5. 13, 14.*

MINISTERS have all the Duties of Christians, in common with others incumbent on them; besides the Peculiar and Eminent Obligations superadded by their Sacred Function. Now, how hard is it to be a Good Christian? And how much Grace do the least in our Flocks need for their Salvation? Much more difficult is it to be a Good Minister of JESUS CHRIST, nourished up in the Words of Faith and of good Doctrine: and much more do they need that the Grace of the LORD JESUS should be exceeding Abundant to them, who are both to Save themselves and them that hear them.

MINISTERS especially need to be strong to Labour and strong to Bear, strong to labour in the Duties of Holiness, strong to bear in the Cause of Holiness.

I. STRONG

51. **STRONG** to Labour in the Duties of Holiness. As the Apostle was among the Ministers of his Day, so every Pastor should be among his People in our Days; to labour more abundant, labouring more than they all, **unto CHRIST** in them.

THEIR Labours are by no means to be imagined only to be in the Pulpit, nor yet only in their Study and Preparations for the Pulpit; and yet these are a great Labour in the Word and Doctrine. You may be Witnesses of the Labours both of Head and Heart, and whether what we bring you costs us nothing. Nor are the Pains with our evil Hearts very often less, to get them into a due Frame, and to bring lively Affections with us in our Work, than those of Study and Composing were before. And after our best Pains of this nature, we may sometimes come sadly Dull and Heavy to you, in Weakness and in Fear, and in much Trembling, Tempted and too much Discouraged. But bowed down under this Spirit of Infirmity we keep on by the help of GOD, in Season and out of Season, Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept, with all Long-suffering and Doctrine.

INDEED the first and great Labour both of Ministers and Private Christians are One and the same: *to fight* with their own Hearts, to get the Mastery of their own Corruptions, Passions and Appetites; to get their Hearts Sanctified, and to keep them in holy Frames for Communion with GOD, and for the Presence and Influences of His Spirit with them; continuing in Supplications and Prayers Night and Day, in a close Walk with GOD.

THIS is the first and hardest Part of our Work, and which once gained makes all the rest Easy and Pleasant.

Pleasant. By this the Minister of CHRIST must lay in Strength for the Rest, and apply himself with great Advantage to his Studies, to Reading and close Meditation, bending all his Powers to the Honour of GOD and the Service of the Church.

VERILY these Secret Labours, as they are the Means of growing Strong in Grace, so they call for much in us. As much Study is a Weariness to the Flesh, so the Study of the Holy Bible, and of the Truths and Laws of GOD, is what the Flesh is most averse unto: Tho' it must be confessed too that it is the most Noble, Useful and Pleasant Study to a pure Mind, and its own abundant Reward; for there is not again the like Mine of rich and deep Literature in the Study of Universal Nature as in our Bibles, in which are found all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge; which pays us well for our pains when we dig for 'em as for Silver.

MOREOVER, The Pastoral Care is no small Labour in the Government of the Church, and in matters of necessary Discipline. This we should ever have at Heart, to keep our selves pure, and having Espoused you to one Husband, to present you as a chaste Virgin to CHRIST. What Carefulness should this ever cause in them that Watch for Souls? What Clearing of themselves? What Indignation at times? Yea what Fear always? What Vehement Desire, and what Zeal? Heb. 12. 15. Looking diligently lest any man fail of the Grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Rev. 2. 2. I know thy Works and thy Labour and thy Patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are Evil.

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ALL Government is a Labour and Burthen. The Shoulders must be strong to bear it. But it may be no Rule calls for more Wisdom and Grace than that which lies on the Pastors of the Churches. Math. 24. 45. *Who is that Faithful and Wise Servant whom his Lord hath made Ruler over his Household, to give them their Meat in due Season?* 2 Cor. 2. 16. *And who is sufficient for these things?* 1 Tim. 3. 15. *That thou mayest know how to behave thy self in the Church of the Living God, which is the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.*

IT is a Grief to any Holy Soul to see (what it cannot suffer) Sin upon another: It is a Pain to a Soul full of Charity and Benignity, to suppose and charge that which is Evil upon any: How much more to Convict, Censure and Restrain from the Priviledges of GOD's House. It is more Comfortable, but not less Laborious, to minister unto the Prevention of Sin, and sometimes to Restore and Heal without Exposing; or in Case of Publick-Offence to bring Sinners unto open Repentance; *to bind up that which was broken, to heal that which was sick, and to bring again that which was driven away,* Ezek. 34. 4.

ALL this belongs to the Pastoral Labour; and in all this the Ministers of CHRIST must gladly spend and be spent for Souls. Our Labours never cease, but are ever new, and call for new Supplies of Grace continually, we are not to rest on Sabbaths or on Week-Days, save that our whole Work is in it self a perpetual Rest to holy Minds. And such ought our Private and common Labours be accounted by us, in making Pastoral Visits, from House to House, to know the State of our Flocks; and to acquaint our selves with the Characters of Persons, and treat them Wisely, Agree-

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Agreeably, Faithfully; Instructing, Advising, Admonishing as we see Occasion; Praying with the Sick, and expressing a just Concern both for Soul and Body, Weeping with them that Weep, Comforting the Feeble-Minded, Relieving the Indigent; bearing with the Infirmities of the Weak, Condescending to them of low Degree, and submissively Overlooking very often the Hau'tiness of Men.

IN all these and many more Instances we are to be *Labourers together with GOD*, under the Influences of His Grace and Spirit, for His Glory, and the Good of Souls. Nor may I omit to mention the private Labours of *Catechizing the Children*, and speaking to them concerning their Souls from their Early Days, putting them in mind of their *Baptism*, and of the Holy Bonds they are under thereby to be the LORDS, and in this way to bring them on to an *Early Recognition* of those Bonds, if it may please God to Impress their tender Hearts betimes: And then it is too pleasant a part of our Work almost to be call'd a Labour to receive the Professions of our People in order to the *Renewing of their Baptismal Covenant*, and coming to the *Lords Table*: And yet indeed the Concern and Fear that this also gives us, when we Examine into your Spiritual State, into your Experiences of a Work of Grace upon your Hearts, into the Sincerity and Strength of your Holy Resolutions; and also the awful Charges from GOD which we then lay you under to beg Grace of GOD that you may be Faithful, and walk *Uprightly* with Him; let these Witness for us, and be our Testimony in your Hearts; whether we do not indeed Labour your Sincere Conversion to GOD, and your Eternal Salvation.

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BUT I should exceed the Bounds you can allow me, if I should launch further into the *Boundless Duties of the Ministerial Office*. We had need be Strong in the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS to go thro' these Labours.

BUT then further,

2. *THE Ministers of CHRIST had need be Strong in Grace to Bear and Suffer well in the Cause of Holiness.* For they are called, and it is given to them in the Behalf of CHRIST, not only to Believe on Him, but to Suffer for His Name.

MINISTERS are bound by their Separation from the World, and Dedication to Spiritual Services, to deny themselves on many Worldly Accounts, and to suffer many Mortifications which are not expected of others: To please all Men in all things, not seeking their own Profit, but the Profit of many, that they may be Saved; and enduring all things (as our Context speaks) for the Elects sake, that they may obtain the Salvation which is in CHRIST JESUS with Eternal Glory.

THE Apostle therefore in this Epistle Exhorts Timothy to Watch in all things, to *endure Afflictions and make full Proof of his Ministry*. It seems we can't do this, without being Exemplary in Bearing Afflictions with Faith and high Devotion, Patience and Resignation.

INDEED the State of the Ministry is not at all with us as it was in the first Times of the Gospel in respect of Suffering for the Truths and Ways of GOD. We live in Honour, Esteem and Respect among

among a Kind and Religious People, we are Decently Supported, some of us (I wish it cou'd be said of all my *Brethren*) without Entangling our selves with the Affairs of this Life. We have not yet been called to suffer Bonds and Imprisonments for the Name of CHRIST, nor have we yet resisted unto Blood striving against Sin. And as GOD only knows how we should endure the *Fiery Tryal*, so we have reason to Pray, that we may be kept from it, and to Adore him in his Gracious Providence that we have been so.

Nevertheless,

IT is certainly the Duty of Ministers to look for many *Tryals in the Discharge of their Duty*, and so to prepare and get ready for them, as that if GOD calls them to suffer *Persecution* they may by His Grace approve themselves as the *Ministers of GOD*, in much *Patience*, in *Afflictions*, in *Distresses*, in *Stripes*, in *Imprisonments*, in *Tumults*, by *Honour and Dishonour*, by *evil Report and good Report*, as *Deceivers and yet true*, as *unknown and yet well known*, as *Sorrowful yet always Rejoycing*, as *Poor yet making many Rich*, as *having nothing and yet possessing all things*, 2 Cor. 6. 4. 8.

INDEED, the petty *Persecution* of the Slight and Scorn of many, of Contempt and Reproach, of Lies, Slanders and cruel Mockings, is still the common Lot of the most Faithful Ministers of our LORD JESUS. In His visible Church there always is a malignant Party of Lewd and Profane People, who will Persecute them that are Eminently Pious and Godly, Peaceable and Faithful, with their Tongues, tho' their Hands are tied. To instance in our own Times, and not to look among our Selves : So we have

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have seen the most Venerable Men in the *Church of England* for Learning, Piety, Labours, Usefulness, Prudence, Meekness and Humility Insulted and Outrag'd while they liv'd, pelted to their Graves, and their Names Persecuted after their Decease, for their Spirit of Moderation, and Faithful Services to the Church. So were Arch-Bishop *Tillotson*, and Bishop *Burnet*, Men of whom the Age was not worthy; of Conspicuous Sanctity, Abundant in their Labours, Steddy in their Conduct, of unspotted Integrity, of an Apostolical Spirit, and ready I believe to have Died either for their Country or for CHRIST; yet these *Great and Good Men* have been loaded with Obloquy. But their *Names* must needs live in the History of the Church, if Truth do not perish from the Earth!

IN short, Ministers must not be mov'd by such Treatment as this which I have represented, how Injurious, Ungrateful and Base soever it be; neither must they count their Life dear, so they may finish their course with joy, and the Ministry which they have received of the LORD JESUS, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of GOD, Acts 20. 24.

BUT what Strength of Grace does this call for? What a Degree and Measure of the Primitive and Apostolical Spirit? 2 Tim. 4. 6. I am ready to be Offered. Acts 21. 13. What mean ye to weep and break my Heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the LORD JESUS.

SURELY CHRIST puts it to all His Ministers as He did to the Two Brethren; Can ye drink of my Cup, and be Baptized with the Baptism wherewith I was Bap-

Baptized? We may not presume to say, *We are Able*: But this we shoud be ready to say — Lord, make me Able! Thy Grace is sufficient for me! Keep me in the Hour of Temptation. Enable me to Die for Thee rather than Deny Thee.

THUS Ministers need to be *Strong* to Labour in the Duties of Holiness, and *Strong* to Suffer in the Cause of Holiness. An Hieroglyphick or Mystical Figure whereof we have in that Illustrious Vision which St. John had of the Four living Creatures before the Throne, Rev. 4. 7. Representing the Courage of the Lion, the Strength of the Ox, the Loftiness of the Eagle, and the Wisdom of a Man. "This is the Stately Emblem of true Gospel Ministers.

AND now I pass to the Fourth and last Head propounded under the Doctrine,

IV. *THIS therefore is the Awful Charge to be laid upon all that undertake the Ministerial Trust and Office; that they be Strong in the Grace which is in CHRIST JESUS.*

THERE is a Charge to be laid upon them, and this Charge supposes a *Strength* in Grace, and binds unto it: And how *Awful* is it to be so bound? What can be more Solemn than the repeated Charges given to Timothy: "I charge thee before GOD, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the Elect Angels, that thou observe these things: And again, "I give thee Charge in the sight of GOD, who quickneth all things, and before JESUS CHRIST, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good Confession; "That thou keep this Commandment without Spot, Unrebukable, until the Appearing of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; And yet once more, I charge
"thee

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“ thee before GOD and the LORD JESUS CHRIST,
 “ who shall judge the Quick and Dead at His
 “ Appearing and His Kingdom.

TRULY it is enough to make one Tremble to hear himself so *Charged* in the Name of GOD. For we can't but consider our selves Weak, Frail and Sinful like other Men, that we are Men of like Passions and Corruptions, and at the same time are like to have more Trials and Temptations to Endanger us. How then shall Ministers be able to Answer the *Titles* given them, and the *Precepts* for their Conduct and Behaviour in the Holy Scriptures?

1. *THE Titles given them.* The Name *Minister* speaks Service, the Name *Presbyter* or *Elder* speaks Gravity and Spirituality; the Title of *Pastor* and *Shepherd* speaks Care, Watchfulness, Tenderness and constant Attendance, with Patience and Unweariedness; the Style of *Bishops* and *Overseers* speaks Wisdom, Concern, and Diligent Inspection; the Name of *Stewards* speaks much Trust, and Obligation to Fidelity and exact Care; the Name of *Builders* speaks both Skill and Care, and Industry and Toil; that of *Soldiers* and *Watchmen* yet more expresses an Obligation to bear Hardship and Fatigue, and to show Valour and Resolution; the Style of *Rulers*, speaks the most Weighty Cares of Government; the Title of *Ambassadors* implies together with a superior Wisdom and Discretion, a sedulous Application to Business, and a high Zeal for the Honour and Service of our LORD; and finally, the Title of *Angels of the Churches* supposes Excellency in Knowledge, Holiness, Zeal, Diligence, Spirituality and Heavenliness; for *Angels* excel in strength, hearkning to the voice of GOD; they are Spirits and Flames of Fire.

THESE

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THESE are the *Titles* given in the Holy Scriptures to the Ministers of the Gospel. And now should we proceed,

2. *TO look over the Rules laid down for their Conduct and Behaviour,* What Measures of Holiness do they not imply? What holy Labours, and what gracious Bearing?

" They are required to be Blameless, Sober, Vigilant, of good Behaviour, given to Hospitality, apt to Teach, holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience. They are required to be Examples of Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity. They are Charged as Men of GOD to follow after Righteousness, Godliness, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekness; Charity and Peace with all that call on the LORD out of a true Heart.

" THEY are required to Preach the Word, to be Instant in Season and out of Season; Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine: That they give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine: That they continue in the things which they have Learned and been assured of: That they speak the things which become sound Doctrine, Exhort and Rebuke with all Authority; in all things shewing themselves Patterns of Good Works; in Doctrine shewing Uncorruptness, Gravity, Sincerity; Sound Speech which cannot be Condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no Evil thing to say of them.

" THEY are required to be Blameless as the Stewards of GOD: not Self-willed, not soon Angry, D " not

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“ not given to Wine, no Striker, not given to
“ filthy Lucre ; but to be Lovers of Hospitality,
“ Lovers of Good Men ; Sober, Just, Holy, Tem-
“ perate, holding fast the faithful Word, that they
“ may be able by sound Doctrine, both to Exhort
“ and to Convince Gainfayers.

“ THEY are directed as the Servants of the
“ LORD not to Strive, but to be Gentle unto all
“ Men, Patient, in meekness Instructing them that
“ oppose themselves, if GOD peradventure may
“ give them Repentance : To serve the LORD
“ with all Humility : To keep back nothing that
“ is profitable for Souls : To teach Publickly
“ and from House to House : To be pure from
“ the Blood of all Men, not shunning to declare
“ all the Counsel of GOD ; and to affirm constant-
“ ly that they which have believed in GOD be
“ careful to maintain good Works.

“ THEY are required to take heed unto them-
“ selves and unto all the Flock over which the
“ HOLY GHOST hath made them Overseers, to
“ feed the Church of GOD which He hath pur-
“ chased with His own Blood ; and to remember
“ the Words of the LORD JESUS which He said,
“ It is more blessed to give than to receive.

“ AND seeing they have received this Ministry,
“ as they hope to find Mercy they are required not
“ to Faint : Never to be ashamed of the Testi-
“ mony of CHRIST, nor of His Suffering Mem-
“ bers, but to be Partakers in the Afflictions of the
“ Gospel, according to the Power of GOD : To re-
“ nounce the hidden Works of Dishonesty, not
“ walking in Craftiness, nor handling the Word of
“ GOD

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" GOD deceitfully, but by manifestation of the
" Truth commending themselves to every Mans
" Conscience in the sight of GOD. That they be
" not of *the Many* who Corrupt the Word of GOD,
" but as of Sincerity, as of GOD, in the sight of
" GOD, that they speak in CHRIST.

" THEREFORE they are further required, That
" they Preach not themselves, but CHRIST JESUS
" the LORD, and themselves your Servants for JE-
" SUS sake. That as Workers together with
" CHRIST they beseech Men. That they cease not
" to Teach and Preach JESUS CHRIST. That they
" take heed how they build, for other Foundation
" can no Man lay than that which is laid
" JESUS CHRIST. That they be not ashamed of
" the Gospel of CHRIST, nor to declare His Testi-
" mony. That they determine not to know any
" thing among their People, but JESUS CHRIST
" and Him Crucified. That their Speech and their
" Preaching be not with Enticing Words of Mans
" Wisdom, but in Demonstration of the Spirit and
" in Power.

" FINALLY they are required to study to shew
" themselves approved to GOD ; Workmen that
" need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word
" of Truth. That they give no Offence in any
" thing, that the Ministry be not blamed. That
" they gladly spend and be spent for Souls, Warn-
" ing every Man, and Teaching every Man, that
" they may present every Man perfect in CHRIST
" JESUS. That they so run, not as uncertainly,
" and so Fight, not as one that beats the Air ; but
" that they keep under their Body and have it in
" subjection, least that by any Means when they
D 2 " have

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“ have Preached unto others they themselves be
“ Cast-aways.

“ IN all these points, Many and Great as they
“ be, they are required to take heed to the Mini-
“ stry which they have received in the LORD,
“ that they fulfil it. That they take the Over-
“ sight of the Flock and feed it, not by constraint,
“ but willingly ; not for filthy Lucre, but of a
“ ready Mind ; neither as LORD's over GOD's
“ Heritage, but as Examples to the Flock ; and
“ when the Chief Shepherd shall appear they shall
“ receive a Crown of Glory, which fadeth not away.

THIS is the *Work and Labour and Patience ; and
Charity and Service and Faith*, which CHRIST re-
quires in the Angels of His Churches. In all this
His Ministers must be Faithful to the Death.
“ They must remember how they have received
“ and heard, and hold fast till CHRIST comes,
“ that no Man take their Crown. He that hath
“ an Ear let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto
“ the Angels of the Churches.

AND now let us conceive if we can what
Strength of Grace is necessary to the Answering these
Holy Trusts, these *Holy and Strict Precepts*? Excelling
Sanctity makes the Character. As from the Begin-
ning, the Levites by their Separation from their
Brethren and Consecration to GOD, were declar'd
to be under Bonds to a *Distinguishing Holiness*. More
Washings were required of them, denoting a higher
Degree of Purity expected of them ; and the High-
Priest, the Head of their Order, bore upon his
Mitre the *Inscription* of, **HOLINESS TO THE
LORD.**

GOD

GOD requires what He Promises, *Pastors after His own Heart*. Even as *David* was a Man after GOD's own Heart in respect of his Eminence for Sanctity and Devotion.

WHEN the SON of GOD came Himself to Minister in His Church, this was His *Glorious Character, Full of Grace*. He did no Sin, He went about doing Good, He was Holy, Harmless, Undeiled, Separate from Sinners, made higher than the Heavens. *Such an High Priest became us*, and such to be sure ought they to be that are His Ministers; Conformed to Him in Holiness. So were His *First Ministers*. 1 Thes. 2. 10. *How Holily, how Justly, how Unblameably, behaved they themselves.*

U S E.

I HAVE said but little on so Great a Subject, and yet I fear have already taken up too much of the Time; I will therefore draw to a Conclusion and Apply the Doctrine.

1. IN an Address to my Brethren in the Ministry.
2. TO the Candidates for the Ministry.
3. TO the Person now to be Ordained. And,
4. TO the Church and Congregation usually meeting in this Place.

I. TO my Reverend Brethren in the Ministry. You will suffer (I know) the Word of Exhortation and Admonition which the Text brings you, to be Strong in the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS: And tho' it be brought you at this time by the Least and the most Sinful among his Brethren, you will Reverently receive it as spoken from GOD unto you.

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I WOULD with Reverence and with Authority from GOD bespeak the *Aged Pastors* Present, — *My Fathers*, be ye Strong in the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS: And we your *Sons* believe that we hear you this Day Blessing us in the Name of CHRIST, and asking for us much of His Grace and Spirit, and Charging us to seek it for our selves. Blessed be GOD for that Strength in Grace which we have seen and do see in Those that have gone before us; the LORD our GOD be with us as He was with them, and double of the Blessed Spirit upon us which He put in them. We wish a great Increase of Strength to them that are Strongest, and with high Complacency, should we Emulate them that do most Excel. The mean while, what Cause for *Self-Reflexion* and deep Humiliation may the Sense of our *Feebleness* and *Weakness* minister unto us.

O my Brethren,

DID we consider Seriously, when we undertook this Great and Holy Ministry, the Strength of Grace it called for? Did we with suitable Humility and Fear, with many Tears and Prayers, seek the necessary Supplies of Grace? Have we by the same Course Improv'd and Grown? What Strength have we attained unto this Day, after that we have been so many Years employed in this Work of the LORD? What need have we to be abundant in Prayer for our selves and for one another, that we may find Mercy and receive Power from GOD to be Faithful in this high Trust.

O THE Terror and Anguish which our Doctrine should strike a *Graceless* Minister with! Are any of us utterly destitute of Saving Grace when we should be

be *Strong* in it? How should our Countenance change, and our thoughts trouble us; the joynts of our Loyns be loosed, and our Knees smite one against another! As his did who saw the Hand come forth out of the Wall and write *Tekel* over against him — *Thou art weighed in the Balances, and art found wanting.*

O HOW much worse is it in Us than in Others, and how much worse will it be for Us than for Others, if we are *Strangers* to that Grace of GOD which we Preach to others? What Horror should it strike us with to think of coming in the last Day unto that *Wretched Plea*, Mat. 7. 22. *Lord, have we not Prophesied in thy Name?* and to receive that dreadful Answer — *I know you not.* Indeed such a Plea made by a Wicked Minister is the Greatest *Self-Accusation*, and will be the Reason of an Aggravated Damnation. For this is the Condemnation, to be Destitute of true Holiness under our Relation to GOD, Consecration to Holy Services, and Ministering unto the Sanctification and Salvation of others.

THIS *Argument* is in the most Solemn manner handled by *Bishop Bull*, in his *Companion for the Candidates of Holy Orders*; and I think his Awful Words well worthy to be Repeated in this Audience. “The Priest that is not cloathed with Righteousness, tho’ otherwise richly Adorn’d with all the Ornaments of Humane and Divine Literature, and those Gilded over with the Rays of a Seraphick Prudence and Sagacity, is yet but a Naked, Beggarly, Despicable Creature; of no Authority, no Interest, no Use or Service in the Church of GOD. The Unholy Teacher, let him Preach never so well,
“ Discourseth

" Discourseth to little purpose. There will be no
 " Life in his Doctrine, because his Life is so desti-
 " tute of the Spirit of Holiness; he will sooner
 " Damn his own Soul, than Save any Mans else.
 " His Discourses tho' Arm'd with the most power-
 " ful Oratory, will serve to move no other Affecti-
 " on in his Hearers than that of Indignation against
 " his Hypocrisie and Impudence, to hear him Excel-
 " lently Declaim against those things of which he is
 " Notoriously Guilty — Such a Man serves to
 " the worst Purposes, to make Men Atheists, Infi-
 " dels and Hereticks. — He Sins with the highest
 " Aggravation of Guilt, and the least hope of his
 " Repentance. He is the greatest and most despe-
 " rate Sinner. — What Remedy is likely to work
 " this Mans Cure and Repentance? Will the dread-
 " ful Menaces and Threats of GOD's Word Affright
 " him? No; these are daily Thunder'd out of his
 " own Mouth, and yet to him they are but *Bruta*
 " *Fulmina*. Will the Gracious Promises of GOD
 " Allure him? No, he daily Charms his Hearers
 " with these, but remains himself as the Deaf
 " Adder. — And so that *Excellent Discourse* goes on.

I AM sure it highly concerns the Ministers of
 CHRIST to have such *Awful Thoughts* as these fami-
 liar with them. And when we hear them our *Belly*
may tremble, our Lips quiver at the Voice, Rottenness enter
into our Bones, and we tremble in our selves, that we
may have Rest in the Day of Death and of the Eternal
 Judgment.

WHEREFORE let us labour to be *Strong* in the
 Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS, that GOD may
 own us and our Ministry, use us now to Serve unto
 His Honour and to the Good of Souls, and Crown us
 hereafter

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hereafter with Joy and Glory. Let us be Strong in Grace, that Men may Reverence us and give Glory to GOD, and not abhor the Offerings of the LORD because they can't help despising them that serve at the Tabernacle and the Altar. If the Pastor is not Strong in Grace how will the Flock languish and famish, and what *Weaklings* will those be that are begotten to CHRIST under his Ministry? Yea what a Burthen and Penance will the Ordinances of the LORD be to the Prophane and Sensual Minister? His mind ever averse to the Holy Offices he spends his Life in! In what Darkness must he live in the midst of Light, and in what Disorder and Confusion thro' the Regret of a carnal mind and the Rebukes of his own Conscience.

TO Conclude, It is a Time of Decay; let Us therefore the rather be *Strengthening the things that remain and are ready to Die*. Let GOD revive us, and His own Work in our Hands: Let us lift up the hands that hang down and the feeble knees: Let us have Trust thro' CHRIST to GOD-ward, that He will prosper us if we do sincerely Devote our selves to Minister to His Glory. We may do all things thro' CHRIST strengthening us. *Wherefore watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit you like Men, be Strong*, 1 Cor. 16. 13. Act up to your high Obligations, by Pureness, by Knowledge, by Long-suffering, by Kindness, by the HOLY GHOST, by Love unfeigned; by the Word of Truth, by the Power of GOD, by the Armour of Righteousness on the Right Hand and on the Left. *Be ye strong therefore and let not your hands be weak, for your Work shall be rewarded.*

E THE

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THE *Grace* of GOD is All-sufficient, and that is Engaged for us. The *Promises* in CHRIST are eno^t to Incourage us, and make us Strong in the LORD, while we are nothing and worse than nothing of our selves. Let us remember the *Blessing* of Levi, the *Thummini* and the *Urim*, Illumination and Holiness, Gifts and Graces requisite for their High and Holy Calling, are with GOD's Holy Ones. We have a Merciful and Compassionate *High Priest*, touched with the feeling of our Infirmities. And there is a *Great Sacrifice* for the Priest-hood. The HOLY SPIRIT was poured out upon the *First Ministers* of the Gospel, and CHRIST has promised to be with those that succeed them unto the End of the World. He holds the *Stars* in His Right Hand. They are *His Gifts* unto His Church, and of His fulness He will ever supply it with those whom He will see Qualified and Furnish'd for, and Spirited, Assisted and Prosper'd in His Service. And Blessed is the Person, whoever he be, whom He Enables, and counts Faithful, and puts into the Ministry. If their Labours and if their Dangers are Great so will their *Reward* be in the Last Day: they shall shine as the Stars for Ever and Ever; and the *Stronger* they are now in Grace the *Higher* they shall be in Glory hereafter.

I I. MY Second Address shall be to *Them that are Candidates for the Ministry*: To the Students who are Designed and Devoted by the Will of their Parents and by their own Choice to the work of the Ministry. Our Sons whom GOD raises up for Prophets and our Young Men for Nazarites. To You our Text brings a very Serious and Suitable Admonition in your Preparations for Service in the Church of CHRIST.

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CHRIST. How should you Study and Labour and Pray for *Abundant Measures of Grace* to Qualify and Furnish you for the Undertaking this Sacred and Awful Work? What need is there that you first get the blessed Experience of a *Change* in your own Heart, and of a fixed growing *Devotedness* of Mind to the Study of Divine Truths, and to the Practice of Holiness? How Sober-minded and Grave in your Deportment should you be, not allowing your selves in any Levities and Gaities whereby any may justly despise your Youth. Reverence your selves, that others may Reverence you already, for your Humility, Modesty, Seriousness of Spirit, and a visible Devotion in GOD's House. Watch already in all things, and Pray daily to GOD to keep you, that you may do nothing to unfit you for Service and to Grieve GOD's HOLY SPIRIT. Flee Youthful Lusts. Study your Bible. Give your self to the Reading and Meditating in GOD's Word. Direct and Subordinate all your Studies unto that, and govern them by it. Do not act rashly in a thing so Solemn as the Entering on Publick Preaching. *My Brethren, be not many Masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater Condemnation, Jam. 3. 1.*

LET me advise our Worthy Young Ministers and Students to read Seriously Bishop Bulls Visitation Sermon on those Words: Also the Venerable Mr. Bowles his Pastor Evangelicus: Mr. Baxters Reformed Pastor, and Dr. Burnets Pastoral Care. Those Treatises may wonderfully serve under the Blessing of GOD to form our Candidates for the Solemn Undertaking the Work of the Ministry. And for a Pattern to you take Bishop Beveridges Private Thoughts upon Religion. There is not a better Manual that

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I know of, after the *Bible*, whereby our Candidates for the Evangelical Ministry may well direct and fix their *Principles* and their *Resolutions*, by the Grace of GOD, before they enter on any Publick Ministrations; yea and after they are Entred. It is ever new and fresh with me, and more and more pungent and quickning, the oft'ner I look into it; and I wish our Young Men that direct their Studies to the Service of the Sanctuary would make it their *Vade mecum*, and carry it about with them.

BUT I leave it to *Those* who have the Honour to be the *Tutors* of our Youth, to direct them with more Propriety and Authority, and to Imprint on them the Awful Regards that become them in their Entering on the Sacred Imployment. Blessed be GOD, we see from Year to Year many Tokens of the Favour of GOD to these Churches, in the *New Stars* that appear and shine among us: *Youths* of good Learning, of bright Parts, of conspicuous Modesty, Gravity, Sobriety, Vertue, and we trust true Sanctity. These are our *Hope and Crown and Joy*. And GOD is my Witness, with what Esteem and Love I bring you the Admonition this Day, *That you be Strong in the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS*, that you may Excel all that have gone before you; if GOD please so to Bless you and Honour you.

YOU had need to be Establish'd in Grace, because your *Times* are like to be harder than ours; more Loose and Careless, more Evil and Trying. Remember what you have seen of GOD in your *Fathers*, who yet remain before you, and are going from you. Will you take up their *Mantles* and cry to their GOD. You have the same GOD and His free Grace to look unto. You have their Prayers

ers and Blessing coming on you, that GOD would Replenish you with every Good Gift, and that you may live and Excel to His Glory.

HAVE a Sacred Regard to the *Great End* of the Evangelical Ministry: *That* you must propose to your selves now as you begin, and thro' all your After-life, to be Instrumental to Convert Sinners from the Errors of their Ways, and to save Souls from Death. And I will only add, Do not depart from that *Way of Worship*, nor those Rules of *Discipline*, wherein you have been Educated, any further than you can Seriously and Conscientiously judge, that the Salvation of Souls, and the Power of Practical Godliness will be better promoted in the other Way. I desire no better *Rule* whereby to Govern or Justify my *Principles*, relating to matters of Order, Church Government, and *Modes of Worship*.

III. I PROCEED now to Address my self to *You in Particular, my Dear Brother, and Worthy Colleague*; who are this Day to come into the *Pastoral Relation* with me unto this *Flock of CHRIST*. All that I have said already has been meant in a more especial manner unto *You*, and for *Your sake* it has been prepared. I chose to stand here to Day to Preach unto *You*, and to Charge *You* awfully from GOD, *Thou therefore my son, be Strong in the Grace, &c.*

YOU will suffer me to bespeak you as your *Elder Brother* in respect of Years: And GOD knows how much I feel of a *Fathers Heart* toward you. From a *Child* you have sat under my *Ministry*, and it is my Honour this Day and great Reward, if it has serv'd any way under the Blessing of CHRIST to Beget you unto CHRIST, to Confirm you in His Truths and Wayes, or to Form you for His Service.

YOU

YOU are the Gift of our *Ascended SAVIOUR* to us this Day. We desire thankfully to *receive* you from His Gracious Hands, and gladly *lay our hands upon you*, to Pray over you and Bless you in His Name. We Bless GOD for the Great Measure of *Ministerial Gifts* which He has adorn'd you with. And we hope that we have seen *much of His Grace* in you. And it gives us Reason to hope that you will be *Strong* therein, if you continue in Study and Prayer with Humility, and diligently improve your *Happy Talents* in the Service of CHRIST.

THE Place which Providence fixes you in requires that you be the *Stronger* in Grace: whether you consider the *Town* it self, for as our SAVIOUR has said to us, *A City set upon an Hill cannot be hid*; or whether you consider the *Burning and Shining Lights* which GOD has set up already in these His *Candlesticks*; or the Weakness and Dimness of *Him* with whom you are to serve, and that the *Congregation* may grow Strong under you.

I WOULD Charge you therefore from GOD to be very *Humble and Lowly in Heart*; sensible of the *Greatness* of the Work you are Engaging in, and of your own *Insufficiency* therefor: That you be therefore very much in *Supplication* and Prayers to GOD for continual Conduct, Influence and Supplies of Grace: That you be *Watchful*, Circumspect and Exemplary in your whole Conversation and Behaviour: That you have and express always a Holy Zeal for GOD, an ardent Love to *Souls*, the highest Concern for your own Soul, and that you make the Souls of the *Young People* of the Flock your special and Instant Care.

YOU

YOU owe the highest Love and utmost Services to the *Families* of this Flock, who have so Unanimously Chosen you to be their *Pastor*, with as many Expressions of Affection and Esteem as you could expect or desire in such a Case. Be frequent in *Visiting* them, the Poor as well as the Rich, especially in their *Afflictions*, and bear their Sorrows, and let your Visits be *Useful* at all times. I have already led you thro' the greatest part of the Congregation, but am sensible we have miss'd many, some of whom we know not where their Habitations are, and should be glad to know them that we may do our Duty to them also. They are your *Charge*, GOD make 'em your *Crown*.

YOU are now in the Vigour of *Youth*, Devote your *Prime* and Strength to GOD, and strengthen my Hands as my *Decline* comes on. Take heed now, for the LORD has chosen you to build up His *Sanctuary* here ; be strong and do it. You are to Renew now the Publick Dedication of your self to the LORD, as I am perswaded that you have in *Secret* Solemnly done it on this Occasion. Do it this Day thankfully, and with holy Fear and Trembling. I Conclude with wishing you *Grace, Mercy and Peace* from GOD the FATHER and from our LORD JESUS CHRIST. With that Salutation the *Apostle* begins this his Epistle to *Timothy* : And he concludes it with the like Benediction ; The LORD JESUS CHRIST be with thy Spirit, Grace be with you. Amen.

I V. AND Lastly, I Apply my Self to the Church and Congregation usually Meeting in this Place.

BRETHREN and Beloved in CHRIST, Be you also Enlarged ; be ye Strong likewise in the Grace that is in

in our LORD JESUS. This should be your care under our *Ministry*. We impart to you by the help of GOD our Spiritual Gifts, to the End that thro' His Blessing on our Labours you may be *Established*. As ye have therefore received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so walk ye in Him; *rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the Faith*, as ye have been taught; Abounding therein with Thanksgiving. For it is a good thing that the Heart be Established with Grace. You need much Grace to do your Duty, to keep the Faith and finish your Course with Joy. Let your Profiting appear. Grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of CHRIST. Let your Faith grow exceedingly, and the Charity of every One of you all toward each other Abound; that we may give Thanks always to GOD for you, and Glory in you in the Churches of GOD. For now *we live if ye stand fast in the Faith*. And the LORD make you to increase and abound in love ~~one~~ towards another and toward all Men; to the End He may *stabilise your hearts unblameable in Holiness* before GOD even our Father, at the Coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST with all His Saints.

DOUBTLESS, *My Brethren*, You find Cause for much *Humiliation* this Day before GOD, that under the Means of Grace enjoyed by you from your Youth-up, your Strength in Grace is yet so small. Wherefore *humble your selves together* before the LORD, and *renew your Covenant together* to be the LORD's People and to walk in His Ways, with a more free and fixed Heart all your Days.

I WOULD Direct my *Exhortation* to You jointly and severally, according to the *Authority* with which CHRIST has vested me.

THE

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THE *Deacons* of the Church I Exhort that they be Grave, holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience, ruling their Children and their own Houses well : for they that have used the Office of a *Deacon* well, purchase to themselves a good Degree, and great Boldness in the Faith, which is in CHRIST JESUS. Even so must their *Wives* be Grave, not Slanderers, Sober, Faithful in all things.

YOU that are *Rich* in this World I Charge from GOD, that you be not High-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living GOD, who giveth us richly all things to Enjoy. That you do Good, that you be rich in good Works, ready to Distribute, willing to Communicate ; laying up in Store for your selves a good Foundation, that you may lay hold on Eternal Life.

LET the *Poor of the Flock* trust in GOD, be Rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Heavenly Kingdom.

THE *Aged Men* I Exhort, as becomes sound Doctrine, that they be Sober, Grave, Temperate, Sound in Faith, in Charity, in Patience.

THE *Aged Women* likewise that they be in Behaviour as becometh Holiness ; not false Accusers, not given to Wine, Teachers of Good things ; that they may teach the *Young Women* to be Sober, to Love their Husbands, to Love their Children ; to be Discreet, Chaste, Keepers at Home, Good, Obedient to their Husbands, that the Word of GOD be not Blasphemed.

HUSBANDS Love your Wives as CHRIST Loved the Church ; and let the *Wife* see that she Reverence her Husband.

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YOUNG

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YOUNG Men likewise I Exhort to be Sober Mind-
ed ; to be Strong and Overcome the Evil one.
Children, Obey your Parents in all things, for this
is well pleasing unto the LORD. *Fathers*, bring
up your Children in the Nurture and Admonition
of the LORD. *Servants*, Obey in all things your
Masters according to the Flesh, in Singleness of
heart, as fearing GOD. *Masters* give unto your
Servants that which is just and equal, knowing
that ye also have a Master in Heaven.

FINALLY, I put you in mind to be Subject to
Principalities and Powers, to Obey Magistrates, and to
be ready unto every good Work ; and Those that
are in *Magistracy* among us I Exhort to approve
themselves the Ministers of GOD unto us for Good.

AND thus *Brethren* you see that you are all of you
in your respective Places and Relations under the Charges
of GOD, and need to be Strong in Grace to Answer
your Obligations. Be Strong one and another, be
Strong all ye People of the Land : As the Prophet sometime
said ; and strengthen the Hands of your Ministers.

PRIZE the Means of Grace which you do Enjoy,
and diligently attend on GOD's Ordinances. Be
Strongly Principled, and abide stedfastly in the
Truth. Let not an Indifferent careless Spirit, with an
Earthly Worldly one grow upon you. Be not tossed
to and fro, with every Wind of Doctrine and
ready to Change. How weak is the Reed shaken
with the Wind ! Unstable as Water thou shalt never Excel.

WATCH over one another in Love. Discharge
your Trusts faithfully, whether Publick or Private
ones. Follow after Peace with all Men and Ho-
linefs.

AN ORDINATION SERMON. 39

ness. Follow the things that make for Peace, and whereby one may Edifie another.

FINALLY Brethren, *Pray for us*, that the Word of the LORD may have free Course and be Glorified. Receive *Him* gladly in the LORD whom you have Chosen and Called, and who gives himself this Day unto the LORD and to you. Think your selves *related* to him, and that you may not decently nor justly call him to Day and leave him to Morrow. *Esteem* him highly in love for his Works sake. *Reverence* and Honour the Gifts and Graces of GOD in him. *Submit* to Him in his Office, and acknowledge him as having Rule over you, and Obey him in the LORD: as One that is to Watch for your Souls and must give an Account, that he may do it with Joy and not with Grief; for that is Unprofitable for you. *Support* him chearfully and honourably in his Work, for the Labourer is worthy of his Hire. The Publick Maintenance alone will not do; Imitate therefore the Laudable and indeed Necessary practice of *these Churches, in their private Assistances to their Ministers*. Particularly you may much help him in Serving CHRIST and the Souls of the Poor and Pious sometimes, if you will please to lodge a *small part of your Yearly Charity* in his hands, to Distribute in his Visiting the Poor and the Sick. Be not easily, suddenly, causelessly *offended* at him. People hurt their own Spirits, as well as wound the Soul of their Ministers when they are so. But *stand by*, assist and defend him from Injuries, that when he sees your *friendly faces* he may thank GOD and take Courage. But above all, let him see you *profiting* under his Ministry. This will *hearten* him in his Work; and to endeavour that
is

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is to be kind to your selves. For his Strength of Grace is for your Benefit, for your Consolation and Salvation ; a means to make you Strong likewise : even as your doing your Duty toward him tends to render Him the Greater Gift of GOD's Grace to you.

I HAVE Sincerely lead you into such Choices which I tho't the best for this Church ; and I think the People of the *Town* may trust their Ministers, that they will faithfully do the like on all Occasions.

GOD make Him a Great *Blessing* to You, and You to Him. May he have many *Seals* of his Ministry among you, and see you Strong in the Grace that is in CHRIST JESUS ; His Comfort and Joy now, and his Crown of Rejoycing in the Day of CHRIST.

T H E E N D.

Mr. COOPER's
CONFESSION
OF
FAITH.

Together with his
ANSWERS

To the QUESTIONS proposed to him
by the Reverend Mr. COLMAN,

Previous to his

ORDINATION.

B O S T O N :

Printed by *T. Fleet* and *T. Crump*, for
Samuel Gerrish and *Daniel Henchman* :
Sold at their Shops. 1716.

MR. COOPER'S
CONFESSION

OF

FALSH

Together with his

ANSWERS

To the QUESTIONS proposed to him
by the Reverend Mr. COLMAN

Previous to his

ORDINATION

BOSTON:

Printed by T. Flax and T. Green, for
Samuel Green and Daniel Hurdman;
Sold at their Shop, 1782.

QUESTION I.

Mr. William Cooper,

WE have been already
praying for you, that
it may please GOD
the Father of Lights,
to fill you with the Abundant Mea-
sures of the Gifts and Graces of His
Holy Spirit: And we have been Ex-
horting and Directing you unto
those Things whereby you may be
Strong in the Grace that is in CHRIST
JESUS.

IT Remains now that we Receive
from you, some *Proofs of the Spirit and*
Grace of CHRIST in you: such as
may be proper to this Great Solemn-
ity before you.

NOW, the first Requisite in a
Gospel Minister is, that he be *Sound*
in the Faith: that he knows, and
that he firmly Assents to the Truth

A Confession

as it is in JESUS. This you are to preach to Others.

I desire you therefore to Confess, as in the Sight of GOD, and before this Great Assembly, *what that Faith is, which you truly believe your self, and solemnly Engage to preach to others.*

ANSWER.

- FORASMUCH as the Glorious
 1 Tim. 1. 11. Gospel of the BLESSED GOD is now to be committed to my Trust; and my Work in the Gospel will be
 1 Thes. 3. 2. to Establish and to Comfort those to whom I am sent concerning their Faith: It seems but Just and Proper, that you should receive some Satisfaction that the Truth of the Gospel does continue with me; and that I should Confess with my Mouth, those
 Gal. 2. 5. Things which I believe in my Heart, and shall put the Brethren in mind of.
 Rom. 10. 9.

- AND this is what I am now about
 1 Pet. 3. 15. to do with Meekness and Fear, so far as thro' Grace, I have attained in the Knowledge of the Mysteries of

of FAITH.

of the Gospel: hoping that the Solemnity hereof, will so Impress my Mind with these things, as that I shall continue in them, and give the more earnest heed unto them. 1 Tim. 4. 16.

I Believe that God is: For the Invisible things of him, from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. Heb. 11. 6. Rom. 1. 20.

BUT touching the Almighty we cannot find him out. Job 37. 23.

THIS is the Message which I have heard of him (and I believe it is True) that GOD is Light, and in him is no Darknes at all: But yet as to us Clouds and Darknes are round about him, and we know not how to order our Thoughts of him, or Speech concerning him by reason of Darknes. 1 Joh. 1. 5. Job 37. 19.

I Believe Incomprehensibleness to be a Divine Attribute; and that 'tis only GOD Himself, who fully knows Himself: I would therefore look into the Revelation which he makes of Him- Pro. 30. 3, 4.

A Confession

Himself, to know what to believe concerning Him.

I Believe GOD has Reveal'd so much concerning himself, and divine Things, as is necessary for us to know.

I most readily Acknowledge the Deficiency of Natural Light, and the Necessity of Divine Revelation, to lead us into a True Knowledge of GOD, our selves, and the way of Salvation.

I Believe Divine Revelation is to be found no where but in the Books of the Old and New Testament.

These I Believe to be of Divine Original and Authority.

These I would make the Fountain from whence to draw all my Knowledge, the Touch-stone to which to bring every Doctrine; and whatever does not agree hereunto I will Reject, as not having the Light of Truth in it. My Understanding I would wish

Isai. 8. 20.

of FAITH.

the most *Profound Veneration* submit to the *Great Mysteries* therein Re-vealed, nothing doubting, but that He whose *Understanding* is *Infinite*, Psal. 147. 5. may Reveal Things too Wonderful for it to know, too High for it to Psal. 139. 6. attain unto.

TO *These* then I apply my self to know what GOD is: And by them I find, that the LORD our GOD is Deu. 6. 4. One LORD, Over all, Blessed for Rom. 9. 5. ever: A Being Self-Existent, and Joh. 5. 26. Self-Sufficient; the Fountain of all Jam. 1. 17. Being, Perfection, and Blessedness: Psal. 90. 2. From Everlasting to Everlasting; the same yesterday, to day, and for ever: In his Nature Spiritual, in his Being Joh. 4. 24. Incomprehensible, in his Perfections Job 11. 7. Matchless and without Compare. 1 Sam. 2. 2.

From *These* I also find, that there is in the *Unity* of the GOD-head, a *Trinity* of Persons, distinguish'd One from the Other in their ways of Subsisting, by their personal Properties, and by the different Parts they Act; yet One in Essence, Equal in Joh. 5. 7. Being, Perfection and Glory. This is

is a Mystery I firmly Believe the Truth of, but awfully Adore the Depth of.

I Believe divine Honours are equally to be paid to each of these Persons: that all Men are to honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; and that Persons are to be Baptized in the Name of the HOLY GHOST, as well as of the Father and the Son.

BY Faith I Understand that the Worlds were framed by GOD. Even the Heavens of Heavens, where is the Residence of his Glory, was framed by him: And those Bright Intelligences, who are the Glorious Inhabitants thereof, and continually stand in his Presence, derive their Beings from Him.

HIS Almighty Power brought this lower World into Being; and his Wisdom dispos'd all things into this Beautiful and Harmonious Order.

of FAITH.

IN which Divine Work I Believe
the Agency and Influence of the Son
and Holy Spirit: For what things
soever the Father doth, these also Joh. 5. 19.
doth the Son likewise; and by His Gen. 1. 2.
Spirit, the Eternal Spirit who mov'd
upon the face of the Waters, He Job 26. 13.
hath Garnished the Heavens.

I Believe a GLORIOUS PRO-
VIDENCE exercis'd over and to Psal. 103. 19.
wards all things: The Thrones and Job. 25. 2.
Dominions above are under its Em-
pire; so are the Devils in the Pit Rev. 2. 20.
below: It orders and disposes the
Great Affairs of States and King- Psal. 22. 28.
doms, and those of particular Per- Prov. 29. 26.
sons; nor is the most Insignificant Mat. 6. 26,
Shrub, or meanest Insect, below its
certain Care and Cognizance: Nor
thing comes to pass by chance, but
in those Motions and Events, which
to us seem most Fortuitous and Ca- Pro. 16. 33.
sual, I believe a divine Disposal.

But in nothing do I find the Concern
of GOD to appear more, or His Perfe-
ctions to shine Brighter, than in the
Redemption of Mankind: Which leads

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me to the *Confession* of many Great Truths *Relative* thereunto.

I Believe that GOD made Man at first Holy and Happy, in his own Image, after his Likeness; "Entred
Gen. 1. 27. "into a Covenant of life with him,
Gal. 3. 12. "upon Condition of Perfect Obedience; giving to him such a stock of Grace as might be sufficient for him.

THE particular Prohibition with which He was pleased to try his Obedience was, That he shou'd not eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; against which he did voluntarily offend, by which one Act of disobedience, we all are made Sinners; thro' that Offence Judgment is now come upon all to Condemnation.

BY this our Persons are not only become Guilty, but our Natures Impure; and both the Guilt and Impurity *Hereditary*, so as that all who descend from Adam, are Sinners from the Womb, and Heirs of Wrath.

Isa. 48. 8.
Eph. 2. 3.

BUT

BUT I Believe that GOD had from all Eternity, Purposes within himself, to Glorify the Riches of his ² Thes. 2. 13. Grace, in the Redemption and Salvation of some of the lost Children of Men.

THE Way and Method of which, I Conceive to be Concerted and Stated, in an Eternal Counsel of Peace, Zech. 3. 13, or Covenant of Redemption, wherein Psal. 89. 3. each of the THREE Persons in the Adorable Trinity did Concur: wherein appears the Wisdom of GOD in ² Mystery, even the hidden Wis- ¹ Cor. 2. 7. dom, which GOD ordain'd before the World unto our Glory.

THEN did the Father lay our help on the Son, as on one that was Mighty, promising that his Hand ^{Psal. 89. 19,} should be with him, and that his ^{21.} Arm also should strengthen him: Then did the Son voluntarily under- ^{Psal. 40. 8, 9,} take to be a Mediator betwix God and Man, and in such a way as might secure the Honour of GOD's Holiness, and the Rights of his Ju-

Rev. 21. 27.

stice, to bring a certain Number, (whose Names were written in the Lambs book of Life) into a state of favour with him, and unto Eternal Blessedness: The Ever-Blessed Spirit likewise readily Offering to do his part, and to apply Redeeming Grace to the Souls of the Elect.

Joh. 1. 14.

Mat. I. 18, 20.

Accordingly *I Believe* that in the fulness of time, the Eternal Word was made Flesh, by a Miraculous Conception in the Womb of a Virgin.

Isa. 9. 6.

I Believe the Mysterious Union of the Divine and Humane Nature in the Person of CHRIST, "so as that" He is GOD and Man in Two "Distinct Natures, and One Person" for ever.

I Believe that He as our Redeemer executes the threefold Office, of a Prophet, of a Priest, and of a King.

Joh. 3. 2.

I Receive him as a Teacher come from GOD, to instruct Men in the Will of GOD for their Salvation: He is the Messenger of the Covenant, the Faithful and True Witness. He

Mal. 3. 1.

Rev. 1. 5.

of FAITH.

13

He is a Merciful and a Faithful High Priest, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People, and to make Intercession for the Transgressors: Isa. 53. 12. He appear'd once to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, by which Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are Sanctified. And he now appears in the Presence of GOD for us, making continual Intercession, in the virtue of that Satisfaction, which he once for all dyed to make. Heb. 2. 17. Heb. 9. 26. Heb. 10. 14. Heb. 9. 12. 70.

And He is a Priest upon his Throne, and he shall bear the Glory, and shall sit and rule upon his Throne. Zech. 6. 13.

I Believe that as he was delivered for our Offences, so he *rose* again for our Justification: He was dead, but is alive, and lives for evermore. Rom. 4. 25. Rev. 1. 18.

I Believe that He afterwards *Ascended* up into Heaven, and is now seated on the *right hand* of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens: Angels, Authoritys, & Powers being made Subject to him; and the Administration of the Kingdom of Providence put into his Hands. Joh. 20. 17. Heb. 8. 13.

I Believe that after He Ascended on high, he sent forth the HOLY SPIRIT, to carry on and effectuate
 Joh. 16. 7, 13. his Mediation for GOD with Men, and to abide with his Church for ever.

This HOLY SPIRIT is sent forth into the hearts of the Elect, to work in them every Gracious and Saving Disposition and Qualification.
 Joh. 14. 16, 17.

I Believe the Necessity of a Change in the Nature of all those who are made Heirs of Eternal Life: They must be born again, and made Partakers of a New and Divine Nature; must have their Minds enlightn'd, their Wills perswaded, and their Souls purified, which can be effected only by the Immediate Operations of the Blessed Spirit.
 Joh. 3. 3.

There is a Change also in the State of These: They are brought out of a State of Guilt and Condemnation, into a State of Pardon and Justification; are accepted with GOD, and accounted Righteous in
 Rom. 8. 1.
 Rom. 3. 24.

of FAITH.

15

his sight, thro' the Righteousness of Phil. 3. 9.
the Active and Passive Obedience of
CHRIST, Imputed to them, and
Receiv'd by Faith of GOD's own Eph. 2. 8.
Operation.

I Believe that the Saints of GOD
shall persevere in Holiness, and never
totally fall away; that He who has
begun a good Work in them, will Phil. 1. 6,
perform it unto the day of JESUS
CHRIST. All that were given to
the Son, in the Eternal Covenant of Joh. 6. 37,
Redemption, shall come to him, and 39.
none shall be able to pluck them out
of his Hands, but he will keep them 1 Pet. 1. 5.
by his mighty Power, against that
day when they shall be called for,
and not one of them shall be wan-
ting, but each presented faultless, Jude 24.
before the Presence of his Glory.

I Believe that at Death, the Souls
of Believers, are made Perfect in Holi- Heb. 12. 23.
ness, and do enter into Glory and Bles-
sedness, while their Bodys being Uni- 1 Thes. 4. 14.
ted to CHRIST, do sweetly rest in
their Graves, till the Resurrection.
But that the Spirits of the Wicked,
are

Jude 6. are Reserved in Chains of Darknes,
unto the Judgment of the Great
Day.

I Believe that Christ will always
Mat. 28. 20. have a Church in the World, and in
it a Seed that will serve him, and be
Psal. 22. 30. accounted to him for a Generation.

I Believe that CHRIST is the alone
Eph. 1. 22. King and Head of his Church, and that
Mat. 23. 8. none else has Power over our Faith,
2 Cor. 1. 24. or Dominion over our Consciences:
And that he has as LORD over his
Eph. 4. 8. 11, own House, appointed the Offices in
124 it, and the Qualifications, Durys and
Privileges, of those who shall sustain
them; and also the several parts of
his Worship, which are to be kept
pure and entire, as they were deli-
ver'd to us.

There are but two Sacraments of the
New Testament, Baptism and the
Rom. 4. 11. Lord's-Supper, which are as Seals
of the Covenant of Grace: The
Joh. 4. 1. former is the Initiating Seal, wherein
by being Washed with Water, in the
Mat. 28. 19. Name of the Father, of the Son, and
of

of the Holy Ghost, we are solemnly
Admitted into the Visible Church,
and Consecrated to the Service of Gal. 3. 27.
the Living JEHOVAH. The latter
is appointed for our Growth and
Establishment in Grace, wherein by Joh. 6. 55;
breaking of Bread, and pouring out
of Wine, and solemnly giving and 57.
receiving the same, the Death of
CHRIST is shewn forth, and the 1 Cor. 10. 16;
Benefits thereof convey'd to every
worthy Receiver. In these and other
the appointed Means of Grace and
Holiness, we are to continue steadfast, Acts 2. 42.
till the Ascended Redeemer comes 1 Cor. 11. 26;
again.

I look for the Second Coming of our Acts 1. 11.
Lord Jesus Christ, when he will be
reveal'd from Heaven with his migh-
ty Angels in flaming fire, to take 2 Thes. 1. 7;
Vengeance on them that know not 8, 10.
GOD, and have not Obeyed his
Gospel; but to be Glorified in his
Saints, and Admir'd in all them that
believe.

I Believe the Resurrection of the Dead, Acts 24. 15.
both of the Just and of the Unjust,

Joh. 5. 24. in order to a final Judgment; and that CHRIST has Authority to execute this Judgment.

I Believe that in the Great Day, the Righteous shall be openly Acknowledged and Acquited, and put into the possession of the Kingdom prepared for them, from the foundation of the World: While the Wicked shall be turned into Hell, with all the Nations that forget GOD.

Rev. 22. 6. *These Sayings are faithful and True:*
 Tit. 3. 8. These (by the help of God) I shall affirm constantly, knowing of whom
 2 Tim. 3. 14. I have learned them.

My Apprehension of these Things, I must Confess to be but Imperfect and Confus'd; but it shall be my Prayer to the Father of Lights, that my Knowledge may grow up to the Riches of the full Assurance of Understanding, in the Myſtery of GOD, even of the Father, and of CHRIST.

Quest.

QUESTION II.

S I R,

WE have seen one *Proof* of CHRIST speaking in you. Hold fast this *Form of Sound Words*, in Faith and Love which is in Christ Jesus. Take heed unto thy self and to thy *Doctrine*; for in so doing, thou shalt both save thy self and them that hear thee.

Nevertheless, it is not Eno' barely that you be Orthodox and Knowing in the *Truth*; but you must see to it, that your *Ends* be right, in your undertaking the Ministerial Office, and the Pastoral Charge.

Wherefore let me further Ask you,

What are the Ends, Aims and Motives, which do Incline you to Enter into this Holy Calling, and by which you purpose to Govern your self in it?

A N S W E R.

I am very sensible that I must see to it, that my *Aims and Ends* be right and good, if I
C 2 wou'd

wou'd Approve my self to GOD, and be Accepted of him; and that if I am Influenc'd by any Selfish or Carnal Views, even my Sacred Performances will be thereby debased and prophaned: I am also sensible that Corrupt Glances are but too Natural; but this I hope I can say, that whatever of these there may be, I do not allow them, I do Renounce them; and that *I wou'd make the Advancement of the Common Interests of Christs Kingdom, and the Common Salvation of precious Souls, the Governing Design of my Ministry.*

QUESTION III.

The *End and Reasons* which you have mentioned, are truly Noble and Excellent, and such as ought to Influence you in your whole Conduct. Great also is the Difficulty of pursuing them steddily, and of acting up unto them in any suitable manner.

Have you then Consider'd seriously, Resolv'd and determin'd upon those *Rules and Methods* for your own Conduct, both in Public and in Private, as a *Christian* and as a *Minister*,
by

by which you hope in some measure to answer and reach unto those Great and Worthy ENDS proposed by you?

A N S W E R.

I am sensible that the *Minister* implies the *Christian*, and that the good Effects of my Ministry upon Others, does in a great measure depend upon the Holiness of my own heart and life: I wou'd therefore *take heed to my self*, and *keep my own Vineyard*; and first seek after an Experience of the Work of Grace in my own Soul, and to exhibit the Power of it in my own Life. The Word of GOD I wou'd make the Rule of my whole Behaviour and Conversation, that so I may be *an Example to the Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Faith, in Love, in Humility, in Purity and Gravity*, and may give no Offence in any thing, *that the Ministry be not blamed.*

As a *Minister* I shall endeavour to perform all Ministerial Duties and Labours, both public and private.

I am sensible (God make me more so) of my own Deficiency in *Knowledge* as well as *Grace*:
I

I therefore purpose to give my self to Reading, Meditation, Prayer, and diligent Study, especially of the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make *the Man of GOD* thoroughly furnish'd.

The *Truths* of the Gospel I will Endeavour faithfully to dispence, and not keep back any part of the Counsel of GOD.

The *Laws* of the Gospel I will Inculcate and Enforce.

Against *Sin* in every Instance of it, I will faithfully witness.

To every particular Person I will, as I am able, give their Portion in due season.

The Worship and Institutions of Christ, I shall Endeavour to observe in the Purity of them, according to his Holy Word; and to Maintain and Exercise that Holy Discipline which he has Instituted in his Church without partiality.

But concerning what I should do, if Trouble and Persecution should arise because of the Word, I would be very Jealous over my self; yet I trust that thro' the *Power of Christ resting upon me*, I shall be Enabled to suffer for the *Truth*, yea to seal it with my blood, rather than betray it.

To

To move and quicken me to all which, I shall Endeavour to affect my self with the Worth of Immortal Souls, and the Danger of my own; to get and preserve an awful sense of the bonds of GOD upon me, and the strictness of that Account which I must shortly give up to the *chief Shepherd at his Appearing.*

These Purposes and Resolutions I would make in an humble Reliance on the Grace of GOD, in a sense of my own Insufficiency; asking the Prayers of the Ministers and People of GOD for me, that I may find Mercy and Grace to be faithful herein unto the Death.

QUESTION IV.

This is a good Profession of holy *Resolutions* before many Witnesses. Our Prayers to the GOD of all Grace are for you, that you may be Enabled to perform. Remember awfully, that These are so many *holy Vows* with which you have bound your Soul.

To Conclude then, Do you in the Presence of GOD, *Angels and Men*, freely Dedicate, and entire-ly give up your self to the LORD JESUS in the Work

Work of the Ministry, accepting of the Call which you have Received from this Church and Congregation and promising by the Help of GOD, to discharge the Office of a Pastor unto them as your particular Charge, and as the Flock over, whom the Holy Ghost makes you an Overseer: Altho' you are to be Ordain'd a Minister in the Catholic Visible Church of our LORD JESUS.

A N S W E R.

I do: Beseeching them to continue to strive together with me in Prayers to GOD for me.

We shall proceed then to the setting you apart in the Name of the LORD, by Prayer and Imposition of the Hands of the Presbytery, according to the Direction of the Gospel.

F I N I S.